

Message Text

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SUBJECT: UNION CARBIDE EMPLOYEES: RECIPROCITY OF BUSINESS VISAS

REF: 75 PRAGUE 1513

1. SUMMARY. EMBASSY OFFICERS MET WITH UNION CARBIDE OFFICIALS AND AGREED TO APPROACH CZECHOSLOVAK OFFICIALS AGAIN TO URGE RESOLUTION OF VISA PROBLEMS OF UNION CARBIDE'S AMCIT EMPLOYEES IN ZALUZI. END SUMMARY.

2. CHARGE AND EMBASSY OFFICERS MET IN CHANCERY MARCH 3 WITH UNION CARBIDE (UC) REPRESENTATIVES, PRINCIPALLY TO DISCUSS AGAIN PROBLEMS OF UC'S AMCIT EMPLOYEES RESIDING AT ZALUZI IN NORTHERN BOHEMIA. UC PARTICIPANTS INCLUDED JOHN W. LUCHSINGER, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT-CHEMICALS AND PLASTICS, GENEVA; G.R. LOWDER AND JAMES CLARK, UC OFFICIALS IN ZALUZI; AND DR. THOMAS J. HALL, UC BUSINESS DIRECTOR FOR EASTERN EUROPE, GENEVA.

3. DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL (REFTEL) THAT ELEVEN UC EMPLOYEES (PLUS DEPENDENTS) ARE OVERSEEING CONSTRUCTION OF HIGH-DENSITY POLYETHYLENE PLANT IN ZALUZI AND HAVE BEEN ISSUED CZECHOSLOVAK VISAS VALID ONLY ONE TO THREE MONTHS WITH LIMITED NUMBER OF EXITS AND ENTRIES. VISAS CAN ONLY BE EXTENDED OUTSIDE OF COUNTRY. IN PAST AND AT UC REQUEST, EMBASSY HAS APPROACHED MINISTRIES OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND FOREIGN TRADE AND CHEMOPETROL (CHEMICAL AND OIL CONCERN) TO SEEK ISSUANCE

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OF MULTIPLE ENTRY/EXIT VISAS VALID FOR SIX MONTHS AND RENEWABLE

IN-COUNTRY.

4. MARCH 3 MEETING CONFIRMED THAT NEITHER EMBASSY NOR UC EFFORTS TO DATE HAVE RESOLVED VISA PROBLEMS. (EMPLOYEES EXPECT TO BE IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA TILL END OF 1976.) ALSO, ZALUZI LOCAL AUTHORITIES CONTINUE TO INSIST ON HOLDING U.S. PASSPORTS OF UC PERSONNEL FOR SEVERAL DAYS AT A TIME DESPITE EMBASSY REQUESTS THAT THIS PRACTICE BE ENDED.

5. CHARGE NOTED HE HAD RAISED ISSUE WITH DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER SPACIL, AND WOULD LOOK FOR OPPORTUNITY TO DO SO AGAIN. CHARGE DID TAKE UP WITH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PRESIDENT CERNY AT RECEPTION MARCH 4, AND CERNY PROMISED TO TAKE UP WITH SPACIL WHEN THEY MET THIS WEEK. CHARGE ALSO BRIEFED DAVID SCOTT (CHAIRMAN US SIDE CZECHOSLOVAK-U.S. ECONOMIC COUNCIL) ON THIS AND SCOTT PROMISED TO KEEP IT IN MIND AND TO RAISE WITH CZECH CONTACTS WHEN POSSIBLE. E/COM OFFICER ALSO AGREED TO REITERATE EMBASSY'S CONCERN TO CHEMOPETROL. BOTH UC AND EMBASSY OFFICIALS ALSO AGREED TO STRESS IN FUTURE DEALINGS WITH APPROPRIATE LOCAL OFFICIALS THAT SUCH UNFAVORABLE VISA TREATMENT OF UC EMPLOYEES, WHO ARE HERE TO ASSIST CZECHOSLOVAKIA ON IMPORTANT PROJECT, DOES NOT ENCOURAGE UC OR OTHER U.S. FIRMS TO ENTER INTO FUTURE AGREEMENTS TO PROVIDE CZECHOSLOVAKIA WITH BADLY-NEEDED WESTERN TECHNOLOGY.

6. COMMENT: MEETING WAS FRIENDLY AND, WE BELIVE, HELPFUL TO BOTH EMBASSY AND UC. WE WILL PRESS LOCAL AUTHORITIES FIRMLY ON MATTERS DISCUSSED. HOWEVER, AS WE POINTED OUT TO UC PEOPLE, EMBASSY IS IN WEAK POSITION TO CLAIM THAT PRESENT TREATMENT IS EITHER DISCRIMINATORY (ALTHOUGH AT LEAST ONE BRITISH FIRM APPARENTLY HAS WORKED OUT MORE FAVORABLE ARRANGEMENT) OR NOTABLY LESS FAVORABLE THAN USG TREATMENT OF CZECHOSLOVAK BUSINESSMEN. UC OFFICIALS FULLY UNDERSTAND THESE POINTS, JUST AS EMBASSY FULLY SYMPATHIZES WITH THEIR EAGERNESS TO REMEDY MATTERS WHICH IMPOSE VERY REAL PROBLEMS ON AMCITS IN ZALUZI.
PERRY

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